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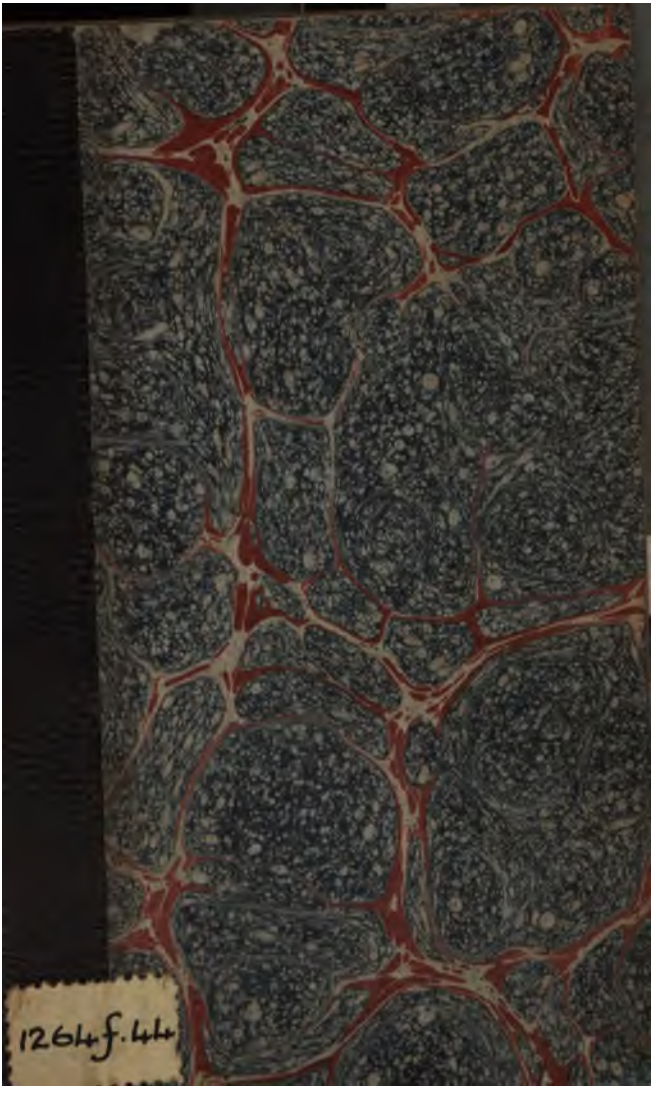
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MY BAPTISED ONE.

THOUGHTS FOR THINKING PARENTS.

BY

BENJAMIN HANBURY.

"They brought unto Him also Infants." *Luke.*

LONDON:

JOHN SNOW, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1850.

LONDON : W. J. PERRY,
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NOTICE.

SINCE it is the practice of some Editors and Publishers of periodicals holding like sentiments with this Author, to refrain, on the plea of peace, from allowing free discussion upon this subject in their pages; it is the more important that liberal supporters of the cause do recommend works which maintain the Scriptural ordinance of Infant Baptism.

BLACKFRIAR'S ROAD,

March, 1850.

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MY BAPTISED ONE:

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE AFFECTION OF PARENTS; SOLICITUDE AND PERPLEXITY; "BAPTIST" WRITERS AND DECLAIMERS.

THIS work, though designedly small, is written to convey so much of information as may impart conviction, comfort, and stedfastness, to minds previously unenlightened, or wavering upon its interesting subject.

Pious parents, and young mothers in particular, become anxious and inquiring in the course to be pursued with regard to the beginning of the increase of their "house."

Their judgments may not be at first, so equally informed, as to agree upon what is

duty at this most interesting period. Each parent has in previous stages of life, heard and read of controversies between christians, on the nature and design of baptism, and together they feel the matter in dispute now marring their comfort, at the approach of a time for decision. They look upon the precious object, the strongest and most endearing of the ties which bind heart to heart; and in their fervour, unconsciously baptising it with their tears, would devote their offspring to be the Lord's in His own appointed way. To assist in directing to that way, is the end proposed in these pages.

Among the expedients of the opponents of Infant Baptism, when they are asked Is it not found in the Bible? one is, to reply, Read that book for yourselves! Thus taking a sure advantage of innocence and incompetency. Whereas, could the inquirers but be made to comprehend the true and various meanings of the Syriac and Greek originals, and be helped to pursue the subject grammatically and analogically, the question would meet with a very different reply; and some,

who fain would keep the uninitiated in ignorance, would often be put to shame.

Should "Baptists" demur on seeing these remarks; then let them shew, on their part, how and when, otherwise than inferentially, any man or woman, living at the epoch of the commission, is commanded therein, figuratively or literally, to be baptised by any mode; or even to present himself or herself to be baptised at all.

A good man "made perfect" in heaven, but one of the straitest of his sect while on earth, found no better argument for his side, than that "Christ *tacitly* prohibited that ordinance from being administered to Infants."*

Surely, an ample apology was, and is needed, for such Pharisaism.

He who could affirm "That baptism was an *ordinance* of God, that submission to it was required, (etc,) *before* the sacred supper was heard of, or had an existence, are

* An Apology for the Baptists, in refusing Communion at the Lord's Table to Pædobaptists, 1778. Works of Abr. Booth, 1813, vol. ii., ch. iii., p. 371.

undeniable facts;"* such a one, though a "pastor," is not to be relied upon.

In his latest publication, Mr. Noel, the newest and most adventurous of the adopted sect, remarks dolefully, that "while it [Infant Baptism] is without the sanction of a single line in the New Testament, or of any inference soundly deduced from the Old, it has nearly banished the ordinance of Christ from many of his churches. A voluntary profession of dying and of rising with Christ by immersion, is in them nearly lost; no one witnesses it; no one thinks of it; and few even know that baptism has that meaning. So completely has the human invention superseded the Divine command, Matt. xv. 6."† Oh, that this good, but still mistaken servant of God, would purify himself from every taint of his old regenerating ritualism; and embrace and avow, like Paul, the entire spiritual tenour of Christ's gospel!

* Ibid. p. 369.

† Essay on the "External Act of Baptism enjoined by Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." By Baptist Wriothesley Noel, M.A., 1850, 12mo., p. ix.

What matters it, we say, though the phrase, "Infant Baptism," be not in the New Testament as it is translated, when the thing is both in the original and in the translation? Who, it has been asked, will venture to assert, that circumcision was abolished, because there is no instance upon record of the rite having been performed from Joshua to John the Baptist? Where do we find "baptise adults?"

"On the subject of baptism, and particularly whether it is applicable to Infants, opinions are divided; and the *majority* [of christians] have come, as we [baptists] conceive, to an erroneous conclusion." So wrote the liberal Robert Hall, in 1815.* Acting under a similar impression, the incessant declamation, direct and indirect, both in pulpits and from the press, which "Baptists" are intent upon, demands that their self-satisfaction be occasionally disturbed. "The popular feeling is theirs, the argument ours," is the boastful expression of

* Works, vol. ii., p. 53.

a living veteran among the declaimers.* We thank him sincerely, for evincing that the goodness of the "feeling," and the insufficiency of the "argument," are finally concluded.

"There is one fault, among others, in the baptist system, that it places the rising generation so entirely out of sight:" this is the remark of one who knew, because he had been a "Baptist." And though he grants, that their conduct is much better than their system, yet he judges that their system is herein faulty; whence he infers, that because it differs from all the known dispensations of GOD towards children, it alone would lead to a presumption that the baptist system is not of HIM. Afterwards, to meet an imaginary objection, "Are not many *unbaptised* infants brought up in christian knowledge equally as well as the baptised ones?" he retorts, "And are not many, who have not been baptised in adult age, as gracious and holy as those who have?"

* F. A. Cox, D.D.; Pref. to Reply to Ewing, etc.

Happily, dogmatism, how persistingly soever repeated, is neither pellucid nor appreciable as is truth; confiding in that divine perfection, the present contribution is intended to secure both illumination and safety. "Magis veritas elucet quò sæpius ad manum venit:"* The oftener truth comes to hand, the more it shines.

* Seneca.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTENINGS AMONG BAPTISTS; DOUBTS AND DIFFICULTIES.

THE remarks which will follow the annexed extracts from a Memoir of William Knibb, by J. H. Hinton, M.A.,* are the result of reflections excited by the case, in the discussion of which, it is hoped, the dedication and baptism of infants of believers are fully justified.

The laborious and useful baptist missionary in Jamaica, had written, "It is customary here, to name the children of the members, and I think that it is a practice likely to be productive of good effects. I have had one or two of these Christenings, and enjoyed them, though I wished that I could enter more

* 1847. 8vo.

fully into the feelings of the parents. The parents bring the child into the chapel after service, and the minister takes it in his arms, and names it. On returning it to the mother, he delivers a short address on the importance of training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, (Eph. vi. 4,) and prays for a blessing at the close. We are glad to embrace every opportunity of talking with them, as they are so ignorant, yet willing to be instructed, and as so few opportunities occur."

Upon this passage, the biographer of Mr. Knibb writes, "I cannot pass over this extract without remark. The practice of naming children, somewhat after the manner described in it, has had a wider prevalence than it has now; although probably it still exists among baptists in England; but it has been deemed by many, and I think with justice, to possess too much of the *animus* and resemblance of infant baptism to be capable of being wisely, or even safely, employed. I beg it to be observed, that Knibb expressly calls the services—no doubt,

in the current language of the island—Christenings. The notion, therefore, which the people attached to them in Jamaica, admits of no question; and it is evident, that the practice must have sanctioned and perpetuated all the ideas connected with the baptism of babes. I cannot help expressing my conviction, that in this way there must have been done more mischief than can have been counterbalanced by the most solemn exhortations to parental duty." *

Mr. Hinton must not be surprised, that some one, as conscientiously sensitive as he professes to be, ventures to differ from him. Occasion presenting itself thus, a latitude will be used beyond the precise limits designed by the preceding writers.

* Page 47.

CHAPTER III.

INVALIDITY OF ARGUMENTS AS DEDUCED FROM JOHN'S BAPTISM, FROM CIRCUMCISION, OR THE AGE OF INFANCY, OR FROM PRECEDENTS.

THE large majority of those who maintain the divine authority of Infant Baptism, deny in consequence,

1. That only adults are the proper subjects of Christ's institution; and deny also,

2. That christian baptism is to be always practised with immersion.

Arguments drawn from John's baptism are not safe: (Acts xix. 3, 4.) "It is demonstrable," Robert Hall says, "that John's baptism was a separate institution from that which was enacted after our Lord's resurrection."* This precludes the idea, that his

* Works, vol. iii., p. 430.

mode was legitimately transferred to Christ's institution.

Neither is any argument or exception valid, that reflects in any way upon the appointment of infants to be circumcised. Consult Deut. xxx. 6. In his recent "Essay on Christian Baptism,"* the Rev. Baptist W. Noel remarks: "I should not omit to recall the phrase in the prophecy of Jeremiah, 'Circumcise yourselves to the Lord,' (chap. iv. 4,) because 'circumcision to the Lord,' is similar to 'baptism to the Lord,' both external acts betokening the same duty of sanctification and dedication to God." Infants were, however, as incapable of understanding and practising the former ordinance or rite, and consenting to the covenant sealed therein, as infants of believers are alleged to be of the latter institution.

They who would maintain that infants are in no case competent subjects for the christian rite, are nevertheless at a fault when they are required to demonstrate the pre-

* Page 14.

cise time in which adolescence ensues upon childhood. We know not any standard they agree upon to demonstrate the measure of knowledge and sincerity of profession necessary to ensure the validity of the rite according to their mode. These points must not, indeed, be pressed more closely than they merit, when it is considered that God himself admitted and accepted compliance with the substance of a positive institution, notwithstanding some considerable variation in circumstances. Levites did what belonged properly to priests, by God's institution, 2 Chron. xxix. 34. The passover itself was kept in the second month, though appointed to be kept in the first, chap. xxx. 2, 3; and the eating of the passover was "otherwise than it was written," verse 18. Divers circumstances, expressly directed for keeping the passover by the Jews, were not observed by them about our Saviour's time; nor indeed, by himself and his disciples.

Mr. Noel writes, "It has been said, indeed, that christian baptism was instituted before, because it is recorded that 'Jesus made and

baptised disciples,' John iv. 1; iii. 26. But this incidental mention of the fact of baptism having been administered by the first disciples, cannot amount to a perpetual law in the churches. Four disciples only are mentioned as having followed Christ: Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, John i. 40—43. Even these had not received their call to leave their nets and follow him, Matt. iv. 18. And it was with reference to a time later than this that Luke records, vi. 13. So that these disciples baptised before they were ministers of Christ [!], and when they were yet very imperfectly acquainted with the gospel."*

But amidst what appear to be discrepancies, it is pertinent to remark, that in Christ's institution of the Supper, Matt. xxvi. 26, women are no more expressed than are infants in the baptismal commission; nor can an instance be produced of a woman being a participant. Thus writes Mr. Noel, "If a distinct authority is wanting to justify the admission of infants to the Lord's supper, it

* Page 2.

must be equally wanting to justify their admission to baptism, because both ordinances require the same qualifications."* If Mr. Noel's argument be not "a shallow fallacy,"† neither is the like argument, as follows: If a distinct authority be wanting to justify the admission of women to the Lord's supper, it must be equally wanting to justify their admission to baptism, because, *etc!*

It is altogether fair to challenge an opponent to produce an instance of the child of a christian parent, whose baptism was at least delayed. Still that would not be satisfactory unless it were shown also that the delay occurred because the child was incapable of the rite according to the terms of the institution, and that it was delayed, moreover, by the guidance of an infallible spirit!

* Page 130. † Page 128.

CHAPTER IV.

INSTANCES REQUIRED; SCRIPTURAL PHRASEOLOGY—THE SPIRIT—THE SEA—FIRE; OFFENSIVE TO DELICACY; ILLUSTRATIONS.

Of the mode, let it be shown that there is in the Old Testament a single instance of one person being dipped or immersed by another; but it must be made evident that christian baptism is invalid without immersion; and not restrict the question to points only on which both sides in the dispute agree. It does appear strange, that men passing for learned, cannot see the impropriety of substituting for a Greek term, a word marked in the dictionaries as "bad, or used only by writers of an inferior class."* Admit that there are obscurity and dubiety in the Greek, there are often misapprehen-

* Ainsworth.

sion and misapplication in the substitute, immersion. Cleanse, purge, and wash, are all alike figurative interpretations, Eph. v. 26; John xv. 3. But Matt. iii. 11, is a sort of crux, or trial; "I indeed baptise [immerse] you with [ἐν] water unto repentance; but he .. shall baptise [immerse] you with [ἐν, in] the Holy Ghost, and [in] fire." The distinction is observable between Acts i. 5, "with [ἐν] the Holy Ghost," and verse 8, "after that the Holy Ghost is come *upon* you," [ἐφ' ὑμᾶς.] And, where the apostle speaks of "divers washings," [διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς] Heb. ix. 10, does he mean divers immersions?

May it not be affirmed, that the mode was prefigured, Isaiah xliv. 3, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and [pour] my blessing upon thine offspring;" and, that the mode has its literal fulfilment in the prophecy, chap. lii. 15, "So shall he sprinkle many nations;" that is, "baptise all (the) nations," agreeably to Matt. xxviii. 19?

Though the precept command to baptise adult believers not before baptised; it does not forbid, nor charge to delay, the

baptism of a believer's infant; nor to reject for invalid, the rite performed without immersion. It is certain, from 1 Cor. x. 2, that "immersed, dipped," cannot be understood there. "All our fathers were under the cloud [the bright cloud's protection, Exod. xiv. 20,] and all passed through the sea [dry, ver. 21.] And were all *baptised* unto Moses in [ἐν] the [bright] cloud and in [ἐν] the [dry] sea." Infants are unmistakeably included in this phrase, "all our fathers." Connect with this, Heb. xi. 29. Any prohibition or exclusion from the institution is, then, on the points of immersion and infants, wholly inferential; being thus simply constructive, the opposite construction admits also of inferences.

As there are moral reasons against immersion, very clear proof is demanded that it is a divine, unqualified, command. No instance can be cited in the law of Moses of one person bathing another, nor of a public bathing before a promiscuous assembly. Besides immodesty, mental distraction, or even unconsciousness, disease, and sometimes

death, are contingent upon immersion; can it be, that Christ appointed a perpetual ordinance whose administration is precarious, and seeming ever to need extraordinary interposition?

Vossius writes of those baptised by immersion, that they were quite bare;—his words are, "Not however bound with a band, such as painters are wont to use for the sake of modesty:" Ne fasciâ quidem cincti qualem pictores adhibere solent pudoris causâ.

For a man to dip grown women, though clothed, carries with it an appearance of evil, from which we are to "abstain." 1 Thess. v. 22.

Now contemplate the instance of the rebaptism [immersion] of the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, M.A., Aug. 9th, 1849. "After singing and prayer over the baptistry, Mr. Noel and thirteen others, six of them females, were baptised in the usual manner by the Rev. Mr. Shepherd." *

Notwithstanding what the procedure was

* "Patriot," Aug. 13th, 1849.

in the above instance, it is understood to be the prevalent practice in that denomination, that a kind of bath, usually at the foot of the pulpit, is supplied with water to about the depth of two and a half feet. A hymn is begun, and at the precise moment of immersion, the words of the institution in Matthew are spoken, but inaudibly to the spectators, when a shriek escapes the agitated party, who appears, sometimes, to come from the water in an unconscious state, being upheld by another to the vestry. In the case before us, fourteen persons are concerned. The administrator precedes, followed one by one, until the fourteen have all been immersed and their "sins" washed away! The questions arise now, Would any one of them have submitted to the like operation in any private bath of similar construction, retaining throughout the self-same water? And how many did, imperceptibly perhaps, imbibe the fluid in which the others had been immersed? Delicate females, not merely such as are of "romantic delicacy," these are questions for you to answer! It is requisite that the water

be "pure;" Heb. x. 22; and see Ezekiel xxxvi. 25; 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

The duty and the discretion of those concerned in the subjoined cases, picked up casually, are so near to a tempting of God, that a sound and chaste mind and conscience would hesitate to approve. "Our merciful Lord demands no service which endangers health."*

"Six persons, five of them women, were baptised in our river on Sunday last. Mr. Chapman, by whom the ceremony was performed, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, had previously preached in the open air for above an hour, and was nearly an hour and a half in the water, administering the sacred rite."—*Western Luminary.*†

"On Wednesday evening last, the ceremony of adult baptism, by immersion, was performed by the Rev. Fielding Ould, of Christ Church. The very unusual occurrence excited considerable attention, the church being filled in every part. A large

* Noel: "Essay," p. 132.

† "Times," Jan. 2nd, 1845.

marble tank had been provided for the occasion, and was placed in front of the pulpit, being in view of the whole of the persons present. At the close of the Scripture lesson for the evening, the reverend incumbent read the usual baptismal service, and, after the immersion, the usual blessing was pronounced, 'We receive this person,' etc. We understand that Mrs. Griffiths was for some time a member of Comus-street Baptist Chapel, but, still retaining her belief regarding adult baptism, preferred being received into the communion of the Church of England by the administration of the ordinance in that way. Not the least remarkable circumstances connected with this unusual occurrence are, that the lady is *enceinte*. The water was tepid."*

The "Shrewsbury Journal" contains a paragraph, that (Nov. 3rd, 1849) a female was baptised in the river. On returning to the shore the administrator's foot slipped, and he with the female were plunged into about six feet of water. A person on the

* "Liverpool Mercury." Jan. 31st, 1845.

bank rescued the female, but the administrator was drowned!

Similar instances need not be added, because many are recorded in other publications upon baptism, and traditionary instances are too numerous, besides that such illustrations are painfully offensive.

The scripture texts adduced for immersion being baptism, are at best inconclusive. What was done in the water, together with what was said? Was water cast upon the subject from a shell, or otherwise? Did John, for instance, cast or pour water upon companies, or upon individuals separately? Did the Saviour enter the water, if at all, to more than a convenient depth for receiving what might be cast upon him? Was John in the water? Could John have really dipped all the multitudes who came, one by one; and women in the presence of multitudes of the other sex? If so, did no disgraceful casualty occur? It is certain that the Eunuch [African Jew,] and Philip, having gone into the water, was not the act of baptism; Acts viii. 38. And let it be never

forgotten that the verse preceding, namely the 37th, is discovered to be an interpolation; that is, it is not in most of the accredited Greek manuscripts: upon this forged verse is especially founded the sectarian phrase "Believer's Baptism!" Is it certain that Saul was immersed, in his enfeebled state? Read Acts ix. 17—19, with xxii. 12—16, and consider whether Saul did not "arise" without leaving his couch: "I looked up upon him," verse 13, compare with John ix. 1, 11, in the Greek. The translators have vitiated the text by inserting "and" before "was baptised," in Acts ix. 18; and again, in xxii. 16, before "be baptised!" "And having risen up, he was baptised," is closer to the Greek, in both these texts.

The case of the jailor "and all his," Acts xvi. 33, merits consideration. Is it certain that in a prison, though in Philippi, a pool, or a capacious cistern, or a tank, adaptable for the immersing successively of the jailor "and all his, straightway," was accessible, and at midnight? Also, is it credible, that while smarting from a scourging with "many

stripes," verse 23, which was long afterward remembered and referred to, the sufferers having then been "shamefully entreated," 1 Thess. ii. 2, those afflicted brethren, Paul and Silas, had strength to turn themselves about without torture while supporting and immersing [*dousing,*] so many? Some remark on the strength imparted would surely have been accompanied by a "thank God" in such a case, 1 Cor. i. 14. In the absence of that, the immersion is incredible, notwithstanding what has been insisted upon by zealots. The narration itself seems to conclude that his submission to baptism was little more, if any, than a bare profession, and that the rite was hastily performed!

It should seem, from the phrase "Can any man forbid water," Acts x. 47, that "they of the circumcision which believed," verse 45, contended with Peter, as did others afterward, chap. xi. 2, because he required that "the Gentiles," on whom had been "poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost," should be baptised with water; when they had witnessed them "speak with tongues," and conduct

themselves as those who had already exhibited the "signs" spoken of, Mark xvi. 17. All this occurred it seems, not till between seven and eight years after the crucifixion. And not till now had any Greek submitted himself to christian baptism; so that the mode, whatever it were, was in conformity with Jewish opinions and customs; a consideration of almost the utmost importance in this inquiry. Was Peter impetuous here, as he had been, John xiii, when he was addressed as in verse 10, and when he had mistaken the material for the spiritual washing? Had he had John's baptism? Mr. Hall remarks, that "but for the vision presented at Joppa, Acts x., from all that appears, the preaching of the word would have been limited in perpetuity to one nation."*

The blood of Christ, called "the blood of sprinkling," Heb. xii. 24, 1 Pet. i. 2; and the Holy Spirit "poured forth," are always communicated to the object, not the object to it; so that the thing signified, should seem to require that the element be applied

* Vol. ii. p. 400.

to the body, and not the body to the element. If the being "buried with Christ in (the) baptism," Col. ii. 12, be urged, it must be shown that it is applicable or not in this argument; that is, if it refer to Christ's literal burial at all. He is represented as literally dead in the above text, and in Rom. vi. 3, 4; but the immersionists bury their subjects alive; yea, before they are figuratively born! Besides, who but they wash in a grave? And if each subject be considered to represent Christ, with what propriety are the words of the institution used; for this is, after a manner, to baptise Christ into himself every time the words are repeated! So much for those who abuse an emblem. The administrator does not after all, immerse the whole body; the greater part is immersed actively by the object, while the head, and little more, is submitted to be dipped passively; thus that mystical washing is limited to what is efficiently represented by pouring. But connect Heb. ix. 13; x. 22.

Alluding to Eph. iv. 5, "one baptism," Mr. Hall represents it "very uncertain

dream dreams; and on (4.) my servants [ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλούς μου, upon my slaves] and on my handmaidens [ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου, on my female slaves,] I will *pour out* in *those days* of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." Next, Paul says, 1 Cor. xii. 13, "For by [ἐν] one Spirit are we all baptised [immersed! plunged! rather transfused] into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles [Greeks], whether we be bond [δοῦλοι, slaves] or free [εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, or free men]." Now refer to Gen. xvii. 12, 13, and then consider whether or not the apostles did baptise whole households, not only the child "born in the house," but "him that is *bought* with money of any stranger, which is *not* of thy seed."

The word rendered "teach," Matt. xxviii. 19, is properly "disciple." A child can be discipled, before it can utter its thoughts vocally, by signs and imitation; so that it can be taught to observe all things, as after baptism, it shall come to know them plainly; and hence, it does not appear by the terms of the charge, that all subjects are to be taught in order to their baptism, but more

properly, in order to their being subsequently taught, or indoctrinated. Matthew Henry accounted among his "mercies received," that he was, in his infancy, brought within the pale of the visible church in his baptism; that he had had religious education, the principles of religion instilled into him with his "very milk," and from a child had been taught the good knowledge of God.* Elsewhere, he is said to have expressed gratitude to God, because his baptism was not only an early admission into the visible body of Christ; but, he says, "as it furnished my pious parents with a good argument, and, I trust through grace, a prevailing argument, for an early dedication of my own self to God in my childhood. If God has wrought any good work upon my soul, I desire, with humble thankfulness, to acknowledge the moral influence of my infant baptism upon it."†

The commission to disciple all (the)

* Life, by W. Tong, chap. ii.

† Evangelical Magazine, Nov. 1819.

nations, is limited by the ability of those commissioned. Where they were not present, instruction was devolved by Providence upon the parents and other converts, to bring the ignorant into the school of Christ. He has nowhere excepted such young disciples from being adopted into his church, any more than the proselytes under the Law were proscribed from being received with their children, how young soever. Believing parents have, verily, covenant ground of hope for their infants. God is a God to believers and to their seed; they are his visible disciples, and admissible to such church ordinances as they are capable of, till by their conduct they prove reprobate.

"If the converts were sometimes baptised [immersed] without the sanction of the churches," writes Mr. Noel;* "this was, in every case apparently, when there were no churches which could sanction them." "The Samaritans, the Eunuch, Cornelius, Lydia, the Jailor, the Corinthians, and the Ephe-

* Page 38.

sians," he adds, "were baptised [immersed] when there was no church in the place." Baptism and immersion are generally synonymous terms with Mr. Noel and pseudo baptists. "The very appellation of baptist," says Robert Hall, in 1826, "together with the tenets by which it is designated, became associated with the idea of bigotry."* In 1818, the same respectable individual, immersionist though he were, said, "The little success which has attended our exhibition of the doctrine of baptism, continued now for many generations, deserves the serious consideration of every intelligent baptist."† Now, mark, what unintelligible matter a baptist's theory obliged that great man to write. He says, "While we universally maintain the nullity of infant baptism, [he means the subject, but derides the mode,] the persuasion which our pædobaptist [infant sprinkling] brethren entertain of their being baptised can never be mistaken for baptism

* Works, vol. iii. p. 448.

† Vol. ii. p. 248.

[immersion,] and they, consequently, cannot be received in the character of baptised [immersed] persons!" *

All who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, Gal. iii. 29; but how are they "heirs according to the promise," (Gen. xii. 3, Acts iii. 25;) if God be a God to parents only, and in no sense such to their seed? The believing Jews would have complained loudly, if they had learned that their children were no longer members of the visible church. The very silence of the New Testament on this point, justifies the conviction that infants are not shut out from the privileges of the Gospel dispensation; especially when it is considered, what was the inducement for Jewish parents to immediately embrace the Gospel, Acts ii. 39. Not only did the same promise embrace their children, but it included "all that are afar off;" therefore, it is not a just interpretation to make it mean afar off "spiritually." Mr. Noel tells us, "Children can be saved without faith, because God can give them regeneration, which is

* Page 254.

equivalent to faith;" and, "as infants are capable of regeneration, they may be saved."* How charitable!

Can the Gentiles be said to "partake," only for themselves who were parents, Rom. xi. 17, and in no sense for their children; when Jews did enjoy church privileges for both themselves and theirs. Could the blessing of Abraham be said to come upon the Gentiles, even the promise of the Spirit by faith, if there be no communication of the blessing to descendants? Canaan and other privileges were typical. The covenant with Abraham and his seed, was not a covenant of works merely. The Gospel is said to have been preached before the giving of the Law, Gal. iii. 8. Somewhat of the Spirit must have been intended—in God being a God to Abraham and his seed; the Spirit at least striving with them; and the blessing was to come upon the Gentiles through the faith of parents, even upon their children, as through Abraham's faith it came upon his, though in a lower measure. Let parents,

* Page 172.

who refuse to appropriate the promise for their infant offspring, look well to the solemn accountability they bring upon themselves! And let the faithful be by no means dissuaded from believing that the Abrahamic covenant stands sure.

Whence is it that an "unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband," and that the "children" of such "are holy?" 1 Cor. vii. 14. That their children are bastards, is a strange distortion, to suit a purpose. That females, as well as males, are "one in Christ Jesus," is plain, Gal. iii. 26—29.

The Saviour's conduct towards little children, intimates that they are conditionally in the visible church. Why must these children "come to him," but because believing parents "brought unto him also infants," Luke xviii. 15; and "of such," [τῶν τοιούτων,] He has declared, "is the kingdom of God," Mar. x. 14. They must be distressed for their cause who plead, that this must be interpreted only figuratively.

Infants of believers are called "disciples,"

Acts xv. 10. Upon their "neck" it was, that the "yoke" of circumcision, with its accompanying obligation, had been tried again to be "put."

Thus it is taught, that all the children of believing parents, are by baptism plainly within the covenant of grace, to be discipled and taught, in order that they may "observe all things" whatsoever Christ commanded, Matt. xxviii. 20.

CHAPTER VI.

EXHORTATION TO PARENTS; THEIR DUTY TO THEIR CHILDREN.

CHRISTIAN PARENTS; and you in particular, thoughtful Mothers! You have seen that the duty and practice of consecrating Infants included in households, have descended from the old covenant into the new; the rites incident to both covenants having, probably, been administered to the subject a considerable time after the Lord's ascension, till the concurrence of the chief apostles, Peter and Paul, was known, Gal. ii. 7. So that now "HE is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition," Eph. ii. 14. Be not dismayed, then, when any who strive to sustain a sinking cause tell you that the two covenants are not "made both one," and who re-construct a "middle wall," whereby "the

Mediator of the new covenant," Heb. xii. 24, is dishonoured, and his grace unduly restricted. For they who call themselves "believers" by eminence, but who put no trust in God's ancient promise to the seed of the Faithful; or if they do, after a sort, yet omit the outward sign and seal thereof; are strangely at variance with the tenour and the analogy of the new covenant, under which dispensation the privileges of the Faithful are not diminished, but enlarged.

Like those who exulted at the Saviour's condescension in embracing little children, his true disciples now will not refrain from exclaiming, Behold how He loveth them! Truly there is redemption for all the race. He makes no exception by repelling even the little ones, and thus through the faith of Abraham is all righteousness fulfilled.

Among the "great multitudes" that followed Him, Matt. xix. 2, there must have been children of very tender age. Mothers, sisters, in faith pressed through the crowd "that he should touch them," so says Mark x. 13; and so great was the throng that the

"disciples rebuked" those who brought the "young children" [παιδία, *dim.*], and they would chide those the more who carried the sucklings [βρέφη,] Luke xviii. 15. But when Jesus saw it, "he was much displeased," and he took them in his arms [ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὰ], put his hands upon them, and blessed them, Mark x. 14, 16. This was His tender affiancing of all such to Himself!

Now, we ask, can you be persuaded that when you bring your little ones to Him, in faith also, presenting them as offerings in His name, cleansed by His blood, and anointed with the Holy Spirit symbolised by the sprinkling of water, thus both dedicated and baptised, that your children are not embraced in the promise, "There shall be one fold [flock] and one Shepherd?" John x. 16. The lambs, are they not of the fold? Is the "animus" of those, then, who present their lambs a thank-offering to God, praying that He would "put a right spirit" within them, a fit subject of discountenance; and, is the practice to be condemned which sanctions and perpetuates what Christian parents

therefore believers, who have duly appro-iated the blessing,—hold to be consistent th the will of Christ and the claims of his ɔspel? No, YOU cannot be persuaded that :ite so truly conformable with the spirit of ırist and his Gospel confers no benefit, events no evil, and contains no moral ɔligation!

"See Israel's gentle SHEPHERD stands,
With all engaging charms;
Hark! how He calls the tender Lambs,
And folds them in his arms.

Permit them to approach, He cries,
Nor scorn their humble name;
For 'twas to bless such souls as these,
The Lord of angels came!

We bring them, Lord, in thankful hands,
And yield them up to Thee;
Joyful that we ourselves are thine,
Thine let our offspring be.

Ye little flock, with pleasure hear;
Ye children, seek His face,
And fly with transport to receive
The blessing of His grace!

If orphans you be left behind,
His guardian care we trust;
That care shall heal our bleeding hearts,
If weeping o'er your dust."

DODDRIDGE: *Hymn* 198.

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